

The Good Food News

A Special Edition Newsletter of *The California Nutrition Network*

Los Angeles Region • Vol. 5 Special Edition

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- Fast and easy breakfast recipes for your family
- Tips on what you can do to help promote breakfast
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Breakfast is the most important meal of the day

Breakfast for Children and Teens



"Breakfast is the most important meal of the day," is what we have been hearing for years. Recent research confirms that children and teens benefit from eating a healthy breakfast. Those benefits include:

- **Higher Test Scores** - Youth who eat breakfast are more alert and ready to learn. They tend to be better learners and score higher on tests.
- **More Positive Attitude** - Breakfast eaters have more positive attitudes and are less likely to cause problems in the classroom.
- **More Energy** - Children and teens who eat breakfast have the energy needed to be active and play.
- **Overall Better Diet** - Breakfast eaters are more likely to meet requirements for nutrients such as calcium and iron. Children who miss breakfast do not make up for lost nutrients later in the day.
- **Healthier Body Weight** - Children and teens who eat breakfast are more likely to have healthier body weights. Breakfast skippers tend to have a higher energy intake from fat. Eating a healthy breakfast is a weight control strategy.

Kids Need Breakfast! What You Can Do To Help

- Keep easy "eat on the run" foods on hand such as fresh fruit and granola bars in your home.
- Have your child participate in his/her **School's Breakfast Program**, if available. It may be free for you.
- When visiting your favorite restaurants, encourage them to provide healthier breakfast items.
- Participate in Summer Food Service Programs that are offered through local Parks and Recreation Departments.



What Makes a Good Breakfast?

Breakfast doesn't have to take a lot of time. Breakfast can be just about anything, from last night's leftover dinner to a peanut butter sandwich to cereal and milk. The main thing is to make it part of your family's morning routine. A balanced breakfast consisting of protein-rich foods, whole grains, dairy, fruits and vegetables can keep your child energized until lunch and can be a quick and easy meal...at home, at school, or on the go! However, the most healthy breakfasts are comprised of three or more food groups.

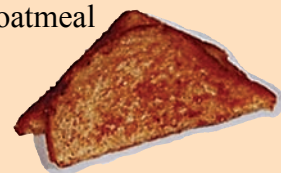
Breakfast Checklist

Does your breakfast contain at least 3 food groups? If so, then you are on your way to providing a balanced breakfast for you and your family.



- **Protein-rich foods:** Eggs, lean meat such as chicken, and fish, beans, soy products and peanut butter

- **Whole grains:** Whole wheat bread, corn tortillas, oatmeal and cereal



- **Fruits, vegetables, or 100% juice:** Healthy juices include orange, pineapple, and tomato



- **Dairy:** Low-fat dairy products such as yogurt, milk, and cheese are good sources of calcium and other nutrients



Breakfast Casserole

Ingredients:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 12 oz. | frozen hash browns or 2 large russett potatoes, peeled and grated |
| 1 medium | red or green bell pepper, diced |
| ½ cup | fresh or frozen broccoli, diced |
| ½ cup | white or green onion, diced |
| ½ cup | reduced-fat cheddar cheese, shredded |
| 2 oz. | low-fat ham, Canadian bacon, or smoked sausage, cubed |
| 4 | eggs or 1 cup egg substitute |
| 2 Tbsp. | non-fat milk |
| ¼ tsp. | ground pepper |

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Spray the inside of an 8 inch by 8 inch baking dish with vegetable oil.
3. Place potatoes in the bottom of the baking dish. Break up any large chunks.
4. Sprinkle the meat and cheese over the potatoes.
5. Put eggs, ground pepper and milk into a small bowl. Whip lightly with a fork and pour over the potato mixture. Sprinkle the casserole with bell peppers, onions and broccoli.
6. Place the uncovered casserole in the oven and bake for 40 minutes or until mixture is set in the middle (not liquid).

\$1.10
per serving



Time Saver



1. Use frozen hash browns, frozen broccoli and pre-packaged, grated cheese.
2. Assemble ingredients the night before, store in the refrigerator and cook in the morning.

Makes 4 servings. Nutrients per serving: Calories-210, Protein-15 g, Fat-7 g (Saturated Fat-2.5 g), Carbohydrate-21 g, Fiber-2.9 g



Making time for breakfast.

Families can start their day right by eating breakfast - the most important meal of the day. On the weekends or when you have time, eat breakfast together - you can talk and share your plans for the day. Making breakfast with your family can be a fun activity too.

- Be a good example for your kids by eating breakfast yourself.
- Before going to bed, get the table ready for the morning.
- Make sure homework is done and school bags are packed before going to bed.
- Wake up a little earlier each day.
- If there is no time for breakfast, call your child's school to find out if they have a **School Breakfast Program**.

84¢
per serving

Banana Bread Oatmeal

Ingredients:

- 2 cups non-fat milk or soy milk
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 cup quick cooking oatmeal
- ¼ cup raisins
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ⅛ tsp. nutmeg (optional)
- 1 medium ripe banana, mashed
- ¼ cup walnuts, chopped (optional)

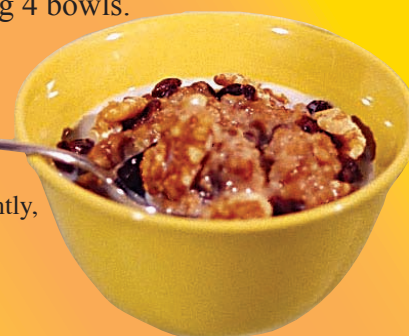
Directions:

1. In a medium saucepan add milk, salt, oatmeal, raisins, cinnamon and nutmeg.
2. Bring ingredients to a light boil on low heat.
3. Stir ingredients with a wooden spoon to ensure that the milk does not scorch the bottom of the pan.
4. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Remove from heat. Cover and let stand for 2 minutes.
6. Stir in banana and nuts.
7. Divide oatmeal mixture among 4 bowls.

Microwave Directions:

1. In a large microwave safe bowl, add all of the ingredients except for the mashed banana and the chopped walnuts. Stir well. Lightly cover the bowl with a paper towel and place bowl in a microwave oven. Cook for 3 minutes, stir and cook for another minute or two. Stir in banana and nuts.
2. Divide oatmeal mixture among 4 bowls.

NOTE: Because microwaves cook differently, times are approximate.



Time Saver



Oatmeal can be made ahead and stored in an airtight container for 3-4 days. When ready to eat, add milk to desired consistency and heat in microwave safe container, lightly covered, for approximately 1- 1½ minutes or until warm.

Makes 4 servings. Nutrients per serving: Calories-210, Protein-8 g, Fat-2 g (Saturated Fat-0.5 g), Carbohydrate-40 g, Fiber-4 g

Quick and Easy Breakfast Ideas:

- Cereal with peaches, cinnamon and low-fat milk
- Warm corn tortilla with cheese
- Fresh berries and yogurt
- Peanut butter on whole wheat toast
- Smoothies made by mixing banana, strawberries and low-fat milk in a blender



The Right Breakfast Reduces the Chance of Birth Defects

By eating a healthy breakfast, you can reduce the chances of having a baby with certain birth defects. Folic acid, one of the B vitamins, is an important nutrient to reduce brain and spinal cord defects, such as spina bifida. All women of childbearing age should consume 400 micrograms of folic acid daily because a baby's brain and spinal cord develop very early, often before a woman knows she is pregnant. Folic acid can be found in many familiar foods as well as in vitamin supplements.

To make sure you get enough folic acid, consider these breakfast foods:

- Breakfast cereals fortified with folic acid
- Orange juice
- Toast made from bread enriched with folic acid
- Spinach omelet

Other foods rich in folic acid are lentils, asparagus, black beans, broccoli, peanuts, and romaine lettuce.

Resources

✓ *Los Angeles Collaborative for Healthy Active Children*

www.lacollaborative.org

- ✓ For information on finding health and human services in Los Angeles County, call:
INFOLINE at 211

✓ *MyPyramid*

www.mypyramid.gov

✓ *Food Stamps Hotline*

1-877-597-4777;

1-800-660-4026 (TDD for the Deaf)



For more information contact:
The Los Angeles Collaborative for Healthy Active Children
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Nutrition Program
3530 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 800
Los Angeles, CA 90010
Phone: 213-351-7889; Fax: 213-351-2793
Website: www.lacollaborative.org



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infinitely more



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